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ABSTRACT

This paper describes the history of moral education in the American public school system. The philosophies of moral education, as advocated by the Puritans, Thomas Mann, Noah Webster, and John Dewey, are examined first. The controversial values education of the 1960s and 70s, which has been replaced by more traditional forms within the last decade, is discussed next. These controversial models--the values clarification method, Kohlberg's theory of cognitive development, and the ethical reasoning method--all shared a focus on process, rather than product. In conclusion, the United States has returned full circle to teaching the popular ideals of the past (values, character, and personal/social responsibility); however, the religious basis for these values is absent. Moral education and religious faith need not conflict with each other, but in the interests of cultural pluralism they must be separated in the classroom. (LMI)

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Values education in American public schools: Have we come full circle?

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The purpose of our project was to study the history of moral education in our country's public school system. This was an ambitious endeavor when one considers the extent to which moral education has played a part historically. We researched moral education, past and present, in order to understand how it has been taught throughout our country's history. We also wanted to learn more about the controversial values education of the 1960s and 1970s which has, in the last decade or so, been rejected and replaced by more traditional forms.

In any society there are differences that may occur among its population. Despite conflicts resulting from different religious, cultural, and social backgrounds, in order to succeed they have to share some of the same basic values and ideas. Without any shared common values a society cannot function and maintain the desired degree of cohesiveness that makes a society communal and strong. Historically, it has been the schools that have been most effective in building a sense of American spirit, values, and community.

In the seventeenth century, in the North American colonies, the primary purpose of education was to maintain Protestant religious beliefs and ensure social stability. Of all the Protestant groups that settled in colonial America, the Puritans, who settled New England, contributed the most that was valuable for our future educational development. Since the roots of American public education lie primarily in the Protestant church and in New England, it has had a profound impact on the history of our educational development.

The Puritans came to New England for religious freedom. They established, in their own sense, what was important; they considered themselves to be creating a model religious commonwealth in the wilderness. "Their goal was to create the good society, that would win God's approval and be used as a model by the rest of the world" (Spring, 1986, p.2).

The religious theme received even greater emphasis when in 1647 the famous "Old deluder Satan law", was enacted in Massachusetts. This law has become famous because it required communities to establish and support schools.

Specifically, the law required any community having at least 50 households to appoint a teacher to provide instruction in reading and writing, and any community of 100 or more households to establish a grammar school. The law opens with the famous words, "It being the chief project of that old deluder, Satan, to keep men from the knowledge of the scriptures...It is therefore ordered..." (McCluskey, 1958, p. 12)

In the preceding decades schools multiplied, but their number and quality varied considerably in the different communities of the colonies. For many years religious, ethical, and moral values indoctrinated by religion were the motivating forces behind education in this country.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, differences between interpretation of dogma split the religious beliefs of this country down the middle (Old Calvinists v. New Light Calvinists or Orthodox v. Liberal). The hostile and irreparable break between the Liberal and Orthodox sects was the atmosphere in which Horace Mann came to adulthood and which embraced him throughout his career as secretary of the State Board of Education.

In 1693, English philosopher John Locke wrote a book called Some Thoughts Concerning Education. Locke's concepts of childhood development greatly influenced the development of public schools in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The concept of the blank slate allowed educational leaders to believe they could create the good society through the proper molding of children. Nineteenth century school reformers like Horace Mann specifically rejected the Calvinist view of the child being born in sin for a concept of the child as a lump of clay that can be shaped for the future. This allowed reformers to dream of

creating the perfect school -- one that would produce the perfect political citizen, the perfect moral person, and the perfect worker.

Mann believed morality and religion were inseparable. When he accepted the post of Secretary of Massachusetts Board of Education, these ideas were already fixed permanently in his philosophy of education.

1. The principle aim of education is the development of the child's moral and religious character. There should be no attempt to separate morality and religion, i.e. the "nonsectarian" or "natural" religion.
2. Character formation is the direct responsibility of the common school; in fact, the common school is the most perfect agency for such formation.
3. As much religious instruction must be given in the common school as is compatible with religious freedom. In teaching religion, the school must not favor any one sect in the community but should inculcate the generally agreed upon moral and religious beliefs of Christianity. The sectarian spirit is, by every means, to be shunned.
4. Natural religion (i.e. "the religion of Heaven" as opposed to man-made creedal religions) means obedience to all of God's laws -- physical, moral, spiritual, religious. This is the true substance of Christianity, who's primary law is the Golden Rule.
5. The Bible, without note to interpreter, is the means par excellence of realizing this primary aim of education because it breathes God's laws and presents illustrious examples of conduct, above all that of Jesus Christ. (McCluskey, 1958, p. 94)

With no exception, Horace Mann believed love for humanity, the "Golden Rule", and the social betterment of the race was the embodiment of what education should be.

Before the Revolution, education mainly served to prepare an individual to live a Godly life. The major goal of education was to ensure that the public knew how to read the Bible, religious tracts, and laws. What distinguished education in pre-revolutionary America is the concept of service to the broader needs of government and society.

After the Revolution, many Americans began to believe that a public system of education was needed to build nationalism, to shape the good citizen, and to reform society. In other words, education in the post-revolutionary period was brought into the service of public policy.

As America moved into the "Age of Reason", the post-revolutionary educational themes began to center around nationalism and to promote feelings of patriotism. In the United States the most popular promoter of nationalism and patriotism was Noah Webster, often called "Schoolmaster of America". Webster's spelling book with its nationalistic themes, replaced the "New England Primer" in importance and use.

Another equally important educational theme concerning the children of revolutionaries was how to establish a balance between freedom and order. For many Americans, the balance of freedom and order was to be achieved through education. They argued that individuals could be allowed to be free if they were educated to be virtuous. In other words, freedom could be allowed if controls over behavior were internalized within the citizen. Stated in a different

manner, freedom meant freedom to do good and act virtuously. Educational proposals by post-revolutionary leaders such as Benjamin Rush and Noah Webster emphasized the importance of educating citizens to be virtuous and thus to exercise their freedom in a correct manner (Spring, 1986, p. 32).

Nationalism and the good republican were major themes in the work of Noah Webster. A prolific writer of political and social essays, his influence was felt on every rung of the educational ladder. He gave us the American dictionary of the English language, an American version of the Bible, and his famous spelling book.

The spelling book was Webster's greatest tool for getting his political and moral values instilled in the children of this country. Webster's Federal Catechism which appeared in the early versions of his Spelling Book was his attempt to make good republicans.

Q. What are the defects of Democracy?

A. In democracy, where the people all meet for the purpose of making laws, there are commonly tumults and disorders. A small city may sometimes be governed in this manner; but if the citizens are numerous, their assemblies make a crowd or mob, where debates cannot be carried on with coolness and candor, nor can arguments be heard: therefore a pure democracy is generally a very bad government. It is often the most tyrannical government on earth; for a multitude is often rash and will not reason.

(Spring, 1986, p. 38)

Webster's spelling books also contained a Moral Catechism to teach the moral values Webster considered necessary for maintaining order in a republican society.

Q. What is moral virtue?

A. It is an honest upright conduct in all our dealings with men.

Q. Can we always determine what is honest and just?

A. Perhaps not in every instance, but in general it is not difficult.

Q. What rules have we to direct us?

A. God's word contained in the Bible has furnished all necessary rules to direct our conduct.

Q. In what part of the Bible are the rules to be found?

A. In every part; but the most important duties between men are summed up in the beginning of Matthew, in Christ's Sermon on the Mount. (Spring, 1986, p. 38)

In the post-revolutionary educational period, morals and political values were taught just like reading, writing, and arithmetic. They were a major portion of the curriculum. The idea was to cement an emotional bond between the citizen and government.

Americans in the early nineteenth century were taken with the idea that institutions could perfect the good person and, at the same time, be creating the good society. This type of thinking made it possible for the country's educational leaders to envision a system of common schooling that would lead to a moral and political reformation of society. The belief in the importance of institutional

arrangements in shaping moral character contributed to the already developing idea that schooling for the entire population was necessary for social and political order.

In 1867, William Torrey Harris was appointed Assistant Superintendent of the St. Louis public school system. At that time, public schools were under fire, and controversies over religion in the public schools were raging. Unlike Mann, who considered basic religious principles common to all people, Harris believed that the separation of church and state was the safeguard of individual liberty. "On the other hand, Harris is clear in his insistence that morality is indispensable to the system of education. `Whatever separation may be made of religion,' he says, `morality must be provided for.'" (McCluskey, 1958, p. 148) Although Bible reading and prayer were common practices in most school systems at the time, they did not have a place in St. Louis schools. Harris agreed fully with the policy that the schools should be completely secular.

By 1898 Harris's ideas of formal discipline and ethical psychology were being replaced by the "New Education". A Young John Dewey's educational message was much more appealing to twentieth century America. Growing immigration and industrialization expanded urban areas and created a host of social problems. A fear also arose that the new immigrants would destroy traditional American values. According to Dewey's ideas, values and institutions needed to change as society changed. Dewey believed motives and choices grew out of social situations; he did not believe, as many other educators believed, that individual motives and goals conformed to the wishes of the group. "The soul of Dewey's entire philosophy: a system of education that best recognized the dignity

and worth of all individuals, that allows every individual to develop to his fullest, and that teaches the virtues of democracy by establishing a democratic atmosphere." (Riner, 1989)

Dewey's philosophy spread, and the idea of socialized classroom activity became popular. At Teacher College, Columbia University, William Heard Kilpatrick used his classes in educational theory to teach a form of group learning called the "project method". Kilpatrick's project method also reflects the tendency in many social education proposals of the 1920s to stress conformity. He considered development of moral character to be one of the important results of the project method.

It is now obvious that Dewey's complex educational philosophy basically split the consensus of moral education in the public schools. Mann, Harris, and Dewey have all charged the schools with the responsibility of character education, but all had different views on how to proceed.

This was reflected in schools throughout the country during the 1920s. Character education programs abounded. "In Chicago in 1931 there were over 200 competing character education plans that schools could adopt" (Wooster, 1990, p. 52).

In the late twenties a team of researchers from Columbia University's Teacher's College began a five-year study of character education in the public school system. This Character Education Inquiry published its findings in a three-volume report. The inquiry declared the character education movement was ineffective at best. There was even some indication that it increased immoral behavior when, in order to do well on good-conduct records, students cheated.

The emphasis on moral education subsided considerably after the Character Education Inquiry of the 1930s. Throughout the next twenty years or so our country -- and the world -- went through many major events and considerable change. World War II, the Korean War, and the beginning of the Cold War all took place in these two decades. In 1957 the Soviets launched the first space satellite and the race for space began. The American education system grew a lot during this time, due in part to these world events. Moral education, however, remained not unlike what it had been earlier in the century.

In the 1940s and 1950s education was unofficially a limited right (Ryan, 1986). Students respected authority and, in general, accepted and followed the rules. They understood that education was a two-way street; they would receive an education, but in return they had to play by the rules. Schools were still expected to reflect the very best of a community's values. Teachers were expected to teach children the difference between right and wrong. Students learned about things like honor, patriotism and the work ethic through literary examples like "A Man Without A Country" and "The Three Little Pigs". Although there was little or no formal moral education curriculum at this time, moral education was still very much a part of school life. Moral education was by no means an easy task in the forties and fifties, but at least it was clear what the schools ere expected to do.

In addition to a morally supportive environment in the schools, the forties and fifties was a time of stable home life for many. Home was the basis for a child's moral education. Children began learning about things like respect, responsibility, compassion for others, civic-mindedness, and the importance of working hard before they ever got to school. Most families had two parents,

many had a mother at home, and just as many had strong religious affiliations. This type of family structure and value system was an essential ingredient in the child's moral education.

The sixties began much as the fifties went out. Soon, however, our country was besieged by problems which left people bewildered and confused about how they should feel and behave. Assassinations, the Vietnam War and antiwar demonstrations, the Civil Rights Movement...all of these began to take their toll on society. There was a heightened awareness of individual rights. There was a prevailing spirit of distrust for any kind of authority, be it governmental, educational, or parental. "Don't trust anyone over thirty!" and "Do your own thing!" were the new credos of the nation's young people. Individual freedom was the issue of the day.

While society at large was going through this major upheaval, education was going through some changes of its own. This is especially true where moral education was concerned. The moral education of the first half of the century had all but vanished. New and "progressive" forms of "values education" appeared on the horizon. Although there were several different values programs being utilized in the sixties and seventies there were only three of major importance. These three -- the values clarification method, the cognitive-development theory, and the ethical reasoning approach -- have been the recipients of much praise, criticism, and scrutiny over the last twenty or thirty years.

Values Clarification

The values clarification method was formulated in the mid-sixties by Louis Raths, Merrill Harmin, and Sidney B. Simon (1976). Its name aptly describes the approach or intent of this method which was that students clarify, or come to an awareness, of their own values. It was this process of awareness which was of primary importance, not the actual values. Of the three prominent values approaches of the day values clarification was, by far, the most popular. By 1975 ten state school boards recommended its use in their schools (Wooster, 1990). This was because it was the easiest to use. The teaching method was comprised of a series of loosely related techniques which were easy for the teacher to learn and use in the classroom. With a minimum of practice the teacher could be quite well-versed in the techniques needed to implement this values education.

According to Raths, Harmin, and Simon (1976) values are an ever-present, ever-changing part of people's lives. They are intimately related to the experiences a person has and, therefore, will vary from person to person just as experiences vary. Based upon this idea they did not try to decide which values would be right for any one person. Instead they focused on the "process"

individuals might use to determine personal values. They devised a "process of valuing" which contained seven criteria; for something to be called a value it must meet all seven requirements. These criteria are described as follows:

1.Choosing freely. Values must be chosen freely by the individual.

2.Choosing from alternatives. Only when there is more than one thing to choose from does a value exist.

3.Choosing after thoughtful consideration of the consequences of each alternative.

4. Prizing and Cherishing. Values flow from choices we are glad to make.

5. Affirmation. Are we willing to publicly affirm our values?

6. Acting upon choices. "Nothing can be a value that does not...give direction to actual living." (Raths, p. 77)

7. Repeating. Values tend to make a pattern in one's life.

(Raths, 1976, p. 76-78)

Raths, Harmin, and Simon recognize that there are many things which appear to be values but, after consideration, turn out not to be. Things such as goals, hopes, feelings, interest, beliefs, and problems are all things which may in time become values, but are not necessarily values in and of themselves. These things are referred to as "value indicators" (Raths, 1976, p. 78). Recognition of value indicators is an important part of the teacher's role in values clarification.

The basic teaching strategy involved with values clarification revolves around the clarifying response. This is a question or response which a teacher poses when he/she recognizes a student is dealing with a potential value, i.e., a value indicator. Clarifying responses should be completely neutral statements by

the teacher geared to make a student look at his ideas and make decisions should he choose to do so. Such responses should be brief and geared to the individual student. Under no circumstances should a teacher moralize; only when certain choices might result in danger, vulgarity, or distortion of the truth is it permissible for a teacher to restrict the student's choice of values. Raths, Harmin, and Simon have suggested various clarifying responses which teachers might try. Some examples follow:

- Where do you suppose you got that idea?
- What would be the consequences of each available alternative?
- Are you glad you feel that way?
- I hear what you are for. Now is there anything you can do about it? Can I help? (Silver, 1976, p. 37)

Values clarification also makes use of group activities to help students decide what is of value to them. Take, for example, the "Name Tag" activity which is on display (Silver, p. 37). This activity not only urges students to think about and choose what is important to them, but also encourages students to affirm these choices publicly.

Values clarification in its purest form is controversial, and often times offensive to the community standard. For this reason we have seen somewhat altered versions of it occurring in our schools over time. The exercise, "Let's Play Ann Landers", is one example. Intended for use by grades 3-7, it emphasizes empathy as a value. Any attempt to impose values is taboo in traditional values clarification; to attempt to lead students to a certain value is an attempt to make

the values clarification method more appealing to the public without abandoning its easy style:

Let's Play Ann Landers

A. Purpose: To allow pupils opportunity to express their understanding of the problems of others.

B. Materials: Bulletin board space. Pen or pencils and writing paper.

C. Procedure: Introduce the lesson by reminding the class that everyone had problems and concerns at some time in their lives. We can often help others most at such times of trouble if we try to understand how they feel. Read the following imaginary letter to the class:

Dear Ann Landers,

I'm just an average student in school but I don't like to do homework so my grades aren't very good. Yesterday I failed a test and now my folks won't let me watch TV for a week. What can I do?

(Signed) a sad student

Next...put the letter up on the bulletin board...Tell the students to imagine they are Ann Landers and write letters to "Dear Sad" giving their advice. Have them mount their letters on the bulletin board so that others may read them...Stress the idea of "feeling with" the sad student. (Hendricks, 1984, p.72)

By the late 1970s people began to question the usefulness and the morality of an approach which left values entirely up to the individual student with no

delineation between right and wrong. More serious charges were also leveled against the values clarification approach. Alan Lockwood (1976) argues that values clarification is grounded in the philosophy of Ethical Relativism. The basic premise of this philosophical theory is that one person's values are as good as another's and that there is no way of showing one opinion is better than another. From this point of view values clarification can be used to justify almost any activity in which an individual or a society chooses to engage. The values clarification advocates "don't seriously entertain such questions as: assuming Adolf Hitler, Charles Manson, Martin Luther King and Albert Schweitzer held values which met the seven criteria are their values equally valid, praiseworthy, and/or good?" (Lockwood, 1976, p. 165)

A 1988 Department of Education report stated that studies "consistently conclude that according to all measures considered, values clarification does not appear to have any effect at all on young people." (Wooster, 1990, p. 53) It was about this time that teachers and administrators began turning away from the values clarification method.

Kohlberg's Theory of Cognitive Development

Professor Lawrence Kohlberg of Harvard University formulated the cognitive-developmental approach to values education. This approach has far more substance than values clarification as it is rooted in Kohlberg's study of philosophy, psychology, and human and moral development.

Kohlberg began his studies in the 1950s. Based on his research on the moral reasoning of children and based on the theories of Dewey and Piaget, he outlined six stages of moral reasoning. These six stages can be described in the following manner:

Stage 1: A morality of punishment and obedience. (Physical consequence determine what is right.)

Stage 2: A morality of instrumental hedonism. (Satisfying one's own need is what is right.)

Stage 3: "Good-boy/Nice-girl" Morality. (Maintaining good relations with others and obtaining their approval is what is right.)

Stage 4. "Law & Order" Morality. (Obeying authority and doing one's duty is what is right.)

Stage 5. Morality of contract, individual rights, & of democratically accepted law. (Standards critically agreed on by the society as a whole determine what is right.)

Stage 6. Morality of individual principles of conscience. (Decision of one's conscience, in accord with self-chosen principles appealing to logical comprehensiveness, universality and consistency determine what is right.) (Fraenkel, 1976, p. 292)

These six stages were further divided into three levels of moral development. The first, or pre-conventional, level included stages one and two. The second level of development was referred to as the conventional level and was comprised of stages three and four. The final and highest level of development was the post-

conventional level which is made up of stages five and six.
(Fraenkel, 1976, p. 292).

Kohlberg believed that as a person goes through life they move through the various levels and stages of moral development. He felt there was only forward motion in this process. Once a developmental stage was attained the individual would not move backwards, but strive to move ahead. "As individuals move upward through the stages of moral thinking, they become...increasingly capable of broader perspectives, especially those perspectives represented by the thinking of others." (Benninga, 1988, p. 418)

Kohlberg admitted that only 10% of the population will ever attain stage 5 or stage 6 (post-conventional) development. Most people will remain at stage 3 or stage 4 (conventional) -- and be quite happy where they are. This brings to light one of the most frequent criticisms of Kohlberg's theory: It seems hard to prove that the higher stages of reasoning really are better than the lower stages and, if they aren't, what would be the purpose for trying to attain a higher level? It makes more sense to try and ground everyone firmly in the conventional level since that is where most people end up anyway (Fraenkel, 1976).

Like values clarification the cognitive-developmental approach does not believe in a teacher moralizing or indoctrinating children with his/her beliefs. Once again the teacher is an evaluator and a guide -- leading the child along through the developmental process. The teaching technique related to the cognitive-developmental approach is a two-fold process. First, the teacher needs to determine what level of development each child has reached. Then the teacher begins challenging the child to think at the next level. This is done largely by

discussions of moral issues in the form of dilemmas. Dilemmas can be presented in many formats -- written, oral, on film or tape, etc. Following the presentation a discussion of the dilemma takes place. Kohlberg's research proved that without these discussions moral development advances slowly at best. The following passage is an example of a dilemma for middle and high school students:

Sharon's Dilemma

> Sharon and Jill were best friends. One day they went shopping together. Jill tried on a sweater and then, to Sharon's surprise, walked out of the store wearing the sweater under her coat. A moment later, the store's security officer stopped Sharon and demanded that she tell him the name of the girl who had walked out. He told the storeowner that he had seen the two girls together, and that he was sure that the one who had left had been shoplifting. The storeowner told Sharon that she could really get in trouble if she didn't give her friend's name.
>
> Should Sharon tell? Why? (Silver, 1976, p. 54)

Teaching the cognitive-developmental approach is quite a challenge for the teacher. Besides being versed in the theory itself, a teacher is likely to have students at different developmental levels in his/her class at the same time. In order to present children with the next level a teacher must keep track of who is at what stage and come up with the appropriate response in the middle of class discussions. Another potential difficulty might occur if a teacher has a child who is at the same -- or higher -- developmental stage as the teacher. In this case, will the teacher be able to challenge the pupil?

Unlike values clarification the cognitive-developmental method is not value-neutral. On the contrary, justice and democracy -- and their achievement through the process of moral reasoning -- was a very important component of this approach.

Kohlberg carried his theory further than the usual classroom situation. In 1974 he and his colleagues began their "just community" school. They had received permission to convert part of a Cambridge, Massachusetts high school into a "just community" school. Instead of the standard school structure, the new school would be a "participatory democracy" in which students and faculty would make all school decisions, set school policies, make curriculum choices, etc. This, he felt, was the ultimate learning experience in moral development. Eventually, this experiment failed. The students were bored. They were not eager or willing to turn their high school into a modern society. The only topics which ever held the students' attention were whether or not to fly a PLO flag outside the school, and whether drugs could be consumed in the school hallways, and, if so, which ones (Wooster, 1990, p. 53).

One of the major criticisms of Kohlberg's work is that it stresses the cognitive and psychological aspects of morality to the exclusion of the affective, or active, dimension. There is evidence that students of this method do attain some degree of moral reasoning ability; however, there is no evidence that this reasoning is ever acted upon. "...A potential problem for any approach to moral education that concerns itself exclusively with reasoning is that subjects learn how to produce more sophisticated justifications for what they believed all along, but they do not necessarily adopt higher moral aims." (Pritchard, 1988, p. 13)

Ethical Reasoning

The ethical reasoning approach, also known as the cognitive method or values analysis, is the third method of values education that has been used over the last two or three decades. This is a very analytical approach to solving moral problems. The basic idea behind this approach is that children should be taught to work through moral problems step by step.

Ethical reasoning is, as the name implies, based on ethics -- the philosophical concept which requires people to think about and distinguish between good and bad, right and wrong. To use this approach in our schools, then, requires that teachers must teach ethics to the students before they can become involved in the ethical reasoning process. Proponents of this approach claim ethics is the foundation of day-to-day moral reasoning (Scriven, 1976). Critics frequently point out that ethics, a subject traditionally saved for college courses, is quite a lofty subject to introduce at the elementary and secondary school levels. Opponents often question the ability of most teachers to handle the teaching of ethics as well.

Michael Scriven (1976), a staunch advocate of this ethical process, has divided it into three broad categories. Understanding these categories helps one to understand the cognitive process(es) involved in ethical reasoning:

1. Knowledge -- Knowledge of ALL the facts involved in a moral issue is important when making a moral judgement.
2. Cognitive Skills of Moral Reasoning -- At this point, a child's cognitive skills are "developed to a level of confidence where they can be exercised in social augmentation." (Scriven, 1976, p. 323) A child

needs to be able to produce quick, rational responses to questions. This requires a great deal of time and effort to reach any level of proficiency.

3. Nature of Origin of Ethics: "Meta-Ethics" -- This involves the very "stuff" that ethics and morality are made of. It is at this point that the individual really begins to make moral judgements, using the knowledge and skills already acquired.

There is no single teaching method associated with ethical reasoning. There are, however, several different models developed by educators (Silver, 1976). These methods vary but they all share a preoccupation with the rational analysis of values/moral judgements. Like the two previously mentioned types of values education, ethical reasoning requires the teacher to guide the students through the process while maintaining an essentially neutral position on the question at hand. Here again, Socratic discussions are an important part of the learning process. Role-playing also can be used in the early stages of the procedure; in ethical reasoning role-playing is seen as a mean of acquiring knowledge about the situation in question. As in the other forms of values education the emphasis is primarily on the process -- rather than the product -- of the valuing experience.

Although ethical reasoning has been used with some success in secondary school social studies situations (Silver, 1976), it can't be said that this method has proven any more successful than the others. It is a difficult approach to use in our public schools because it is very time consuming. It also involves a rather complicated thought process which is problematic, especially at the elementary and middle school levels (Ryan, 1986).

Values clarification, the cognitive-developmental approach, and the ethical reasoning shared several characteristics which were fundamental to each method. They were all concerned with the cognitive aspects of morality. They were concerned with how one ought to behave, not with actually behaving, i.e., "process" before "product". This did not necessarily result in "good" behavior; often all it did was produce better excuses for bad behavior.

In the early 1980s an abundance of studies and reports came out which described the condition of the American public schools (Ryan, 1986). Our schools were failing, not only academically, but morally as well. It was official. The progressive values education methods of the sixties and seventies had fallen short of their goals. In his last book (published posthumously), Lawrence Kohlberg summed it up: "Permissiveness did not create morality...The 1970s may be remembered as the decade of failed educational experimentation. Open campuses, unstructured time, and free schools lessened the restrictions on adolescents but did not foster self-direction or participation." (Wooster, 1990, p. 53)

Clearly, with a "foundling father" disparaging their effectiveness, the neutrality-laden theories were permanently panned. The nation entered the eighties trying to right itself, trying to establish a semblance of order. Ronald Reagan replaced a care-worn President Carter in 1980, bringing to the White House a somewhat more positive atmosphere, despite the Iran-hostage situation. A "family feel" prevailed, evidenced partly by the overwhelming popularity of situation comedies such as "Family Ties" and "The Cosby Show". Much of the post-Vietnam War anger had dissipated (Ryan, 1986).

President Reagan's administration kept education issues in the forefront. Some of the publications forthcoming included: A Nation at Risk (1983); the College Board Report entitled Academic Preparation for College: What Students Need to Know and Be Able to do (1983); and a report from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching entitled High School: A Report on Secondary Education in America (1983). "These reports stressed failings related to academic achievement, but many of the schools' failings were moral in nature: poor discipline, vandalism, physical abuse of students and of teachers, students' escape from serious academic effort through television and drugs" (Ryan, 1986, p. 231).

William Bennett, who was at that time functioning in the capacity of Secretary of Education, and a California state superintendent for public instruction, Bill Honig, were two of the first to breach the "neutrality code" and label the requisite virtues of civic duty and respect for other. Mr. Bennett urged a renewal of character formation, and Mr. Honig concurred but to the extent that character formation provided a sufficient excuse to return to a more traditional curriculum (Benninga, 1986).

The religion, stripped both from the values clarification programs and Kohlberg's cognitive-developmental theories has not necessarily made a gallant return to the classroom, but many values easily reconciled to religion have. Mary McKinney, Fairfield Elementary School Guidance Counselor, sought a values education curriculum in which she, a Christian, could comfortably espouse. While she is careful to restrict her religious viewpoints from the classroom, it is

not her desire to abdicate the moral influencing responsibility that many values clarificationists gratefully relinquished.

Mrs. McKinney is, in fact, developing a curriculum she has termed a "Responsibility" curriculum. A somewhat convergent approach is implemented, first describing to students in grades 1-4 what in their world evokes curiosity: people, happenings, places, and things. They are then lead, via their sensory systems, to a discussion of how the brain categorizes its messages, using such terms as "good (or bad)-for-me knowledge", "general knowledge", and "all-I-want". All-I-Want is the category representing the successful culmination of Good-for-Me and Bad-for-Me processing, that state of happiness for which we generally strive.

Next, students focus on four elements thought to represent a Good Life: belonging (to family, friends, a class), gaining power (preferably through learning and thus improving self-esteem), being free (to plan for the future, to be oneself, to choose what to do next), and having fun (winning, playing games, getting things done).

Evolving from the discussion of what constitutes a happy existence is a study of the behavior system, a comparison and weighing of the life the individual child is having versus the life he desires. Students are each encouraged to confront inwardly their goals, study their behaviors and evaluate their behavioral choices.

A review of the different types of "feelings" is appropriate at this time since students need to be aware of how behavioral choices affect emotional well-being, both of themselves and of others. They are now prepared for the crux of

the lesson: how to choose behaviors that provoke self-satisfaction and happiness while considering everyone's rights. G-PAR refers to a system of goals assessment, planning (to achieve desired results), action (the chosen behavior), and results evaluation. Presumably, a negative results evaluation should be followed by a new plan, new action, and hopefully, an improved result.

Mary McKinney extends her curriculum both to parents and teachers to ensure a higher degree of uniformity amongst sphere-of-influence members. She remains confident that universal use of G-PAR, particularly when dealing with more difficult students, will raise the responsibility levels of elementary students as they prepare for the more complex choices within middle school.

Acting responsibly is a theme central to certainly one of the more widely-known values education programs designed by the Pasadena, California-based Thomas Jefferson Research Center (Wooster, 1990). A 1990 program called the "Twelve Steps to Success" lists the following "valuable" character traits: be responsible, be here, be on time, be friendly, be polite, be a risk taker, be a goal setter, be confident, be a listener, be a doer, be a tough worker, and be prepared. The directives are cast in a positive light; for instance, "Be on time" refocuses the student to the desired behavior, rather than "Don't be late." The twelve steps span a three year period under the auspices of the "How to be Successful in Less Than Ten Minutes a Day" plan (Jefferson Center, 1991).

A striking similarity exists between this curriculum and the Fairfield Elementary School responsibility theme. The STAR decision-making process encourages responsible choice-making: stop, think, act and review. Self-esteem

training, thought to be crucial in the responsible-decision-making processes of both programs, is also advocated.

A third school of thought suggests the existence of a "hidden curricula", a teaching of values embedded in traditional subjects, mostly English literature and social studies (Benninga, 1988). For example, an instructor wishing to focus on justice as a them might select for study To Kill a Mockingbird, or on honesty, The Scarlet Letter. These moral agendas are somewhat more random and diverse, making useful comparisons difficult.

Kevin Ryan, a professor of education at Boston University, suggests moral values may be defined as those lessons required to help society function in a civilized, democratic way. He further alludes to a new moral education that may most readily be explained through five factors, all beginning with "E": example, explanation, exhortation, environment, and experience (Ryan, 1986).

Regardless of whether or not the teacher sees himself or herself as a figurehead, which children invariably do, so leading by example is crucial to successful moral education. Children are innately curious, particularly with moral issues, such as what they should do, given a particular circumstance, and the teacher need not necessarily "indoctrinate" to convey the response in a moral manner. Exhortations should be metered carefully, but are most appropriate in instances where the point needs stronger affirmation. "A youth who is flirting with racist ideas may not question this kind of sloppy thinking until he or she feels the heat of a teacher's moral indignation", for example. A moral environment can be created within the classroom, one where fairness and cooperativeness are expected. Experience teaches incalculable moral lessons

when carefully orchestrated. These may take the form of community service, athletics, or tutoring of the less-advanced within the classroom.

Problems exist within each of these programs. For instance, what happens when values collide with one another? Martin Wooster, a Washington editor, queries the acceptability of civil disobedience, regardless of circumstance, in the face of the moral imperative to respect the law. Mr. Wooster also points to another problem, that of our value system having Judeo-Christian roots. Removing the cultural context of our values, he contends, makes them less riveting and certainly less "compelling" (Wooster, 1990).

The program offered by the Thomas Jefferson Center has its limitations as well. While certain behaviors have become less prevalent, very little evidence exists to show bonafide character changes. Further, while self-esteem appears to have risen, actual grades have not appreciably risen.

While the popularity of values education programs continue to escalate, it should be noted that the "V" word continues to evoke connotations of religious dogma for many. (Abrams, 1992). (The Jefferson center ducks this objection by using different terminology - character education.)

David E. Purpel, a professor of education at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, thinks that individual moral education programs do not accomplish their missions, that they imply, by their existence, that other programs abound in which morality is not relevant (Purpel, 1992). He states, "Indeed, the most truly moral analysis of education has come not from the moral educators but from people who have instead developed sensitive and penetrating moral critiques of the school/society/cultural matrix." The times in which we live call for

educators to ground educational policies in a "larger moral analysis of our culture and society." His implication is strong that we need to be a moral group of educators, conscious of the moral "big picture", and critical of the amoral behaviors of our society as they pertain to our everyday school lives.

Several of the authors researched for this paper have discussed the useful role of great literary works in the conveyance of moral ideas. The Jefferson Center has devised supplements for both high school English and Social Studies curricula that place heavy emphasis on values, character, and personal and social responsibility. Washington editor Martin Wooster agrees. "McGuffey may be dated, but Nathaniel Hawthorne, William Shakespeare, and George Eliot have much to teach even the most jaded high school student." (Wooster, 1990, p. 55)

Have we come full circle? Generally, yes. The popular ideals are the same. The religious bases for these values is conspicuously absent, but I do not believe this to be an insurmountable problem, particularly if the educator is careful to tailor his instruction to that which is easily reconciled with religious tenets. Even if the individual instructor is nonreligious, he or she can still legitimately convey universal secular values such as civic duty, fairness, honesty, or respect for others.

What is different, perhaps, is our motivation for training children to be moral individuals. The diversity of American children no longer allows us to pursue one religious faith. Further, the multitude of changes occurring in the east are causing us to think about raising children as cooperative, moral individuals so that they may be able to "work and play well with others" in the new global order.

Religion may still play a fundamental role in our daily lives. Moral education and religious faith need not be in conflict with each other, but in the interests of cultural pluralism, we must separate them for the classroom.

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